

Public Schools Accountability Act (PSAA) Advisory Committee

Minutes

**Library Galleria, Sacramento
Thursday, October 25, 2001**

Members Present:

Holly Covin, Assistant Executive Director Policy Analysis and Research, CSBA
General Davie, Jr., Superintendent, San Juan USD
Vicki Barber, Superintendent, El Dorado COE
Tom Boysen, Sr. Vice President, Education Milken Family Foundation
Marilyn Buchi, President, CSBA
Marc Ecker, Superintendent, FountainValley USD
Lisa Horwitch, Senate Education Committee
Pam Kinsely, Teacher, Harding School
Kelvin Lee, Superintendent, DryCreek Joint Elementary School District
Cecelia Mansfield, Vice President for Education, California State PTA
Lynette Nyaggah, Teacher, Rio Hondo College
Shelly Spiegel-Coleman, ESL Consultant, Los Angeles COE
Bernice Stafford, Vice President of School of Marketing and Evaluation, Lightspan, Inc.
Ting Sun, Natomas Charter School
Rosie Thompson, Business Unit Executive, IBM Global Education, IBM
Charles Weis, Superintendent, Ventura COE
Lynn Wilen, Superintendent, Reef Sunset USD

Members Absent:

Eva Baker, Director, Center for the Study of Evaluation, UCLA
Mary Alice Callahan, President, Morgan Hill Federation of Teachers
Ana Bertha Castellanos, Vice President, State Parent Advisory Council
Rudy Castruita, Superintendent, San Diego COE
Brian Edwards, Office of the Secretary for Education
Patsy Estrellas, Teacher, Norwalk La Mirada School District/CTA
Edward Haertel, Professor, Stanford University
Jerry Hayward, Co-director, PACE
Ernesto Ruiz, Director, Migrant Education Region 2, Butte COE
Jai Sookprasert, CSEA
Rene Townsend, Professor/Consultant, CSU San Marcos College

Principal Staff to the PSAA Advisory Committee:

Bill Padia, Director, Policy and Evaluation, CDE
Pat McCabe, Manager, EPIC, Policy and Evaluation, CDE
Patrick Chladek, Manager, Awards Unit, Policy and Evaluation, CDE

Academic Performance Index (API) Update – Bill Padia

2001 Base Year

- Bill Padia distributed the latest copy of “The 2001 Base Academic Performance Index (API): Integrating the California Standards Test for English-Language Arts into the API” that illustrates the SBE approved elements of the 2001 Base API. The SBE adopted weights that are equivalent to those used for the SAT-9, which is contrary to PSAA’s original recommendation.
- The name of the factor that will be added to each school’s API, to account for lower performance on the standards-based test, was changed. What was known as the Neutral Introduction Factor or NIF will now be the Scale Calibration Factor or SCF. The SCF is estimated to be quite small for all schools, positive for elementary schools (less than 5 points) and negative for middle and high schools. Chuck Weis began a discussion about whether a SCF is really necessary given how small the number will be. The discussion ensued and other members commented about how it will become necessary when Math is introduced and may even become a grade-by-grade factor rather than a school wide one. The SCF will be the same for the Base and Growth API’s.
- The SBE accepted the PSAA’s recommendation to wait to introduce the Math standards-based test until the 2002 Base API. The High School Exit Exam (HSEE) may also be added in 2002. The Technical Design Group (TDG) has begun analyzing the Math content standards test and will continue with that work through this year, culminating in a proposal of how to add such a non-universal indicator to the API. Through the year, work will also begin on how to add the HSEE, another non-universal indicator to the index.
- The SBE accepted all other proposals for the 2001 Base API (e.g., how much weight would be taken from each content area for the SAT-9 to incorporate the new standards-based test).
- The 2001 Base API will be released in mid-January. New statewide decile ranks and similar school ranks will be published and the English-Language Arts standards-based test will be included.

2000-01 Growth

- The public release of the 2001 Growth API went without major problems this year. The server at the CDE was able to keep up with the demand from the public once the data was released.
- Fewer schools met their growth targets this year (57% in 2000-01 vs. 71% in 1999-2000: Table 1 in the News Release). Bill Padia took the group through Tables 1-7 and said that more analyses would be done.

- About 400 schools are still working with Harcourt to correct their data. A final 2001 Growth data file will be released in December 2001.

Other

- SBE policy on adult testing irregularities was incorporated into the regulations. The 15-day changes to the proposed regulations were presented to the SBE at its October meeting. The proposed change stipulates that if the testing irregularity was small (affected less than 5% of the students) that school will receive an API, but will be ineligible for awards for one year. This is a change from before where the school's API was invalidated. The new proposal would allow schools to participate in the many other API-based programs, but not allow them to be eligible to receive monetary awards for one year.
- Chuck Weis commented about the release of the II/USP eligibility list without API data. He had a difficult time fielding calls in his county about the schools that showed up on the II/USP eligibility list because the API growth data hadn't yet been released. He requested that the timelines be better aligned so that the API data was available when the eligibility listing for II/USP was released. Bill Padia responded by pointing out various legislative requirements that mandate the release of the II/USP eligible schools on a date prior to which API data is available.

University of Arkansas Study: Implementing Accountability in Public Education

Gary Ritter, professor of Public Policy and Shawn Mulvan, professor of Statistics, University of Arkansas, were at the meeting to describe a research study that they are undertaking with funding from the Smith Richardson Foundation. The two-year study will focus on the educational accountability programs in nine states; California is their first stop. They are interested in how the PSAA Advisory Committee works, and how the PSAA legislation was enacted. To reach this goal, they have developed survey instruments for parents, teachers, administrators, and other state personnel. From us they could use our perceptions on how PSAA has evolved over the last three years, lessons learned, and recommendations for other states. A summary of their research design was distributed at the meeting.

Update on STAR settlement and API

- Patrick Chladek and Edmundo Aguilar presented this informational item. This settlement concerns a lawsuit that was brought against the state from four San Francisco area school districts. Of particular importance is Paragraph 3 of the settlement agreement, which states that schools that are denied API-based awards solely on the performance of their English Learner (EL) students, are eligible to apply for a waiver to the SBE. The language of the settlement offers recommendations with regard to the type of waivers that the SBE can grant. The provision is that if the school can show that they were denied API-based awards solely because of their EL students and can show that their EL students are improving, then the SBE can approve a waiver for that school.

- The disclosure of the recommendations to the SBE ignited a spirited discussion within the Advisory Committee about whether this issue fell within their scope of work. General Davie Jr. felt that this issue wasn't relevant to the Awards and Interventions subcommittee, but Shelly Spiegel-Coleman was concerned about whether the CDE would provide guidance to schools and districts looking to apply for a waiver under these circumstances. She pointed out that for the parental opt-out waivers that, in some cases, schools had to apply more than once because the first time they didn't submit the appropriate data. Her wish was for the CDE to publicize guidelines for schools that may apply for this waiver. Bill Padia said that this issue really wasn't closely related to the work of the PSAA Advisory Committee and that the Waiver Office at the CDE would handle how to proceed.

Other

- Bill Padia gave an update about the contractor for the external evaluation of PSAA. American Institutes of Research (AIR) has been selected as the contractor for this 20-month study that includes an evaluation of the API, the awards program, and the interventions program. The passage of AB 961 has complicated this contract a bit because it called for the evaluation of the new program to be done along with the evaluation of the entire PSAA program. The Policy and Evaluation Division (PED) will be working with the contractor to iron out the specifics.
-

Awards and Interventions Subcommittee Report – Holly Covin

- Wendy Harris spoke about AB 961 and how it will change the landscape of interventions for some schools, and also the timelines. AB 961 consolidated many bills that were targeted for under-performing schools and concentrates the funding with the lowest performing. Schools will be funded at higher rates and districts will be held accountable for demonstrable progress. AB 961 also introduces a new state sanction option that wasn't available before. Instead of "taking over the school" as the most severe sanction, AB 961 allows for the school to contract with a School Assessment and Intervention Team.
- General Davie Jr. talked about their earlier discussion regarding defining significant growth. There are three different phases and their sub-committee wanted to start out with a less stringent definition and over time move to the more stringent definitions. The CDE will do some data modeling for them to determine how many schools meet the criterion of each definition. Pat McCabe then explained a series of SPSS tables that show a cross tabulation of school's API improvement for 1999 and 2000.

Alternative Accountability Subcommittee Report – Vicki Barber and Lynn Wilen

- As of October 1, 2001, 940 schools had selected the indicators that they would use for their accountability system.

- The CDE has been very responsive to the field in securing additional CDS codes, specifically for County Offices of Education that were operating multiple schools under one CDS code.
- The CDE is also looking into a set of locally developed assessment instruments that schools might be able to use in 02-03.
- This subcommittee has been working closely with staff from the CDE's Special Education Division to ensure that special education schools and centers aren't inundated with an additional layer of accountability over and beyond what they already report to the state and the federal government. They are working together to come up with a feasible system for students in special education that aren't tested with the STAR, even with accommodations. They hope to go to the SBE with their recommendations in November 2001.

Holly Covin adjourned the meeting at 2:45 p.m.